

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 1

Policies and Responsibilities

Page 1

1.1 Purpose. This part documents authorities, standards, and procedures that have general and continuing applicability to wildland fire activities under the jurisdiction of the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs.

1.2 Policy. It is the policy of Indian Affairs to:

A. Avoid exposure of fire fighters to life threatening situations unless human lives are at risk;

B. Protect resource values from wildland fire while obtaining benefits to the resource from wildland fire use and prescribed fire at the least cost;

C. Coordinate and cooperate with tribes and other protection agencies in order to achieve efficiency and effectiveness;

D. Maintain an appropriate state of interagency preparedness with adequate resources and trained, qualified personnel; and

E. Integrate wildland fire management decisions and natural resource management decisions based on the premise that wildland fire is a critical ecological process.

1.3 Authority.

A. Statutes. The statutes which authorize and provide the means for managing wildland fire on and or threatening lands under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior are identified in Part 620 of the Departmental Manual, Wildland Fire Management.

B. Regulations. 25 CFR 163.28, Fire Management Measures.

1.4 Guidance. The following reports, guides and handbooks are available from the National Interagency Fire Center, Attn: Great Basin Cache Supply Office, 3833 S. Development Avenue, Boise, Idaho 83075.

A. Government-wide.

(1) Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review Report.

(2) Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review Implementation Action Plan Report.

(3) Federal Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Implementation Procedures Reference Guide.

(4) Federal Interagency Fire Management Qualifications (IFMQ) Guide.

(5) National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification Subsystem Guides (PMS 310-1).

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 1

Policies and Responsibilities

Page 2

- (6) NWCG Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook.

B. Department of the Interior.

- (1) Departmental Manual Part 620, Wildland Fire Management.
- (2) Departmental Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) Handbook.

C. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

- (1) Fire Use Handbook.
- (2) Fire Management Training Systems Handbook.
- (3) Fire Management Preparedness Analysis (FMPA) Handbook.
- (4) Model 52 Wildland Engine Program Annual Operation Guide.
- (5) National Hotshot Crew Management Guide.
- (6) Emergency Firefighter Crew Management Guide.
- (7) Certifying Officer/Assistant Disbursing Officer (CO/ADO) Handbook.

1.5 Scope. The provisions of this part of the Indian Affairs Manual apply to all wildland fire management programs operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and to those operated by an Indian Tribe or tribal organization under a Self-Determination contract. Indian tribes which have negotiated Self-Governance compacts are encouraged to comply with the standards contained in this Part.

1.6 Definitions. Wildland Fire Management involves all wildland fire program activities related to national, regional and field programs except aviation activities which are described in 57 IAM. This includes activities occurring on lands under the jurisdiction of Indian Affairs and on lands for which Indian Affairs has fire protection responsibilities for either wildland fire or prescribed fire.

A. Wildland fire - any non-structure fire, other than prescribed fire, that occurs in the wildland.

B. Prescribed fire - any fire intentionally ignited at management direction to meet specific objectives.

1.7 Responsibilities.

A. Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner approves national level cooperative wildland fire management agreements with other Federal agencies and interagency wildland fire coordinating groups.

B. Director, Office of Trust Responsibilities.

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 1

Policies and Responsibilities

Page 3

(1) Implements the policies and recommendations in the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review Report.

(2) Provides for the coordination of wildland fire management activities with other Federal, state, and non-government fire protection agencies.

(3) Serves as the Bureau's representative on the Management Oversight Team, which is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Federal Fire Policy, through the Federal Fire and Aviation Leadership Council (FFALC).

C. Director, National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC).

(1) Develops policies and standards for firefighter safety and training, and for the prevention, suppression and use of wildland fires on Indian Trust lands.

(2) Provides guidance to Regional Directors on the use of prescribed fire and fuels management to achieve hazardous fuel reduction and resource management objectives.

(3) Integrates wildland fire procedures into natural resource management.

(4) Establishes position competencies, standards and minimum qualifications for fire management officers, wildland fire specialists and leaders based on federal interagency standards recommended by the FFALC.

(5) Implements the interagency FMPA process and develops procedures and standards for the distribution of program resources.

(6) Reviews and evaluates Regional wildland fire management programs.

(7) Represents Indian Affairs in the coordination of overall wildland fire management activities at NIFC and on intra- and interagency wildland fire committees, groups and working teams, which include but are not limited to:

(a) National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG);

(b) Federal Fire and Aviation Leadership Council (FFALC);

(c) National Multi-agency Coordinating Group (MAC); and

(d) Interior Fire Coordination Committee (IFCC).

(8) In conjunction with other Federal Fire Directors, establishes priorities for assignment of critical resources during wildland fire emergencies.

(9) Initiates or participates in Boards of Review concerning actions taken on selected

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 1

Policies and Responsibilities

Page 4

wildland fires.

(10) Negotiates cooperative agreements and/or modification of existing national-level agreements to improve wildland fire management activities on Indian lands.

(11) Reviews funding requests for severity, hazardous fuel reduction and emergency rehabilitation of Indian trust lands damaged by wildland fires; makes determinations on funding levels and recommends approval to the Director, Office of Trust Responsibilities.

(12) Serves as designated contact for the United States Department of the Treasury for the certification and revocation of CO/ADOs and Designated Officials for emergency incident payments.

D. Regional Directors.

(1) Ensure that activities and/or plans reflect a commitment to safety and a state of readiness, commensurate with values at risk, to minimize wildland fire loss.

(2) Oversee wildland fire use and fuels management programs.

(3) Develop Regional level cooperative wildland fire protection agreements.

(4) Submit funding requests to NIFC for severity funding and emergency rehabilitation of Indian trust lands damaged by wildland fires.

(5) Direct Regional movement of fire management personnel and equipment to meet emergency needs.

(6) Determine when a critical fire situation has exceeded Agency/Tribe capability and ensure that qualified personnel take immediate charge of fire suppression activities; request assistance when the wildland fire situation exceeds the capability of the Region's resources.

(7) Assign Boards of Review for selected individual fires which presented unusual problems or situations.

(8) Negotiate cooperative agreements and self-governance compacts with tribes for wildland fire management programs as needed.

(9) Provide consolidated Regional FMPA, based on subject matter experts review and recommendations and monitor the expenditure of wildland fire management funds.

(10) Oversee the Region-wide CO/ADO program for emergency incident payments.

(11) Represent Indian landowners and Indian Affairs on Geographic Area Coordination Groups (GACG) and on MAC groups.

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 1

Policies and Responsibilities

Page 5

E. Agency Superintendents, unless excepted by Regional Directive.

(1) Ensure that every wildland firefighter, fireline supervisor and fire manager takes positive action to obtain compliance with established standards and safe firefighting practices.

(2) Protect Indian lands from wildland fire by taking appropriate action as specified in the approved fire management plan to meet Indian landowner objectives or in the absence of an approved plan, take immediate suppression action, consistent with other standards.

(3) Develop plans and implement activities for prescribed fires and other fuel reduction activities.

(4) Ensure Agency wildland fire management personnel develop and maintain fire management job qualifications and meet physical fitness standards in accordance with policy and assign personnel to fire suppression and prescribed fire activities according to qualifications and demonstrated ability.

(5) Develop, update, and maintain the Agency FMPA and annual prevention and mobilization plans, and ensure initial attack capability and availability to provide for an adequate level of protection from wildland fire.

(6) Initiate approved BAER activities to prevent unacceptable resource degradation and minimize threats to life or property resulting from wildland fire.

(7) Develop, update and maintain Agency Fire Management Plans.

(8) Negotiate cooperative agreements with adjacent protection organizations as needed.

(9) Recommend a Board of Review be established to review actions taken on selected individual fires.

(10) Request assistance through appropriate interagency channels when the fire situation exceeds the capabilities of the Agency's resources.

(11) Maintain the integrity of the CO/ADO program at the Agency level for emergency incident payments.

(12) Initiate investigation of fire trespass.

(13) Enter and maintain fire occurrence and employee fire qualifications in the Shared Applications Computer System (SACS).

(14) Document the decision-making process in a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) when a wildland fire exceeds suppression efforts, management capability is inadequate to accomplish fire use objectives, or a prescribed fire can no longer be implemented in accordance with the approved plan; and approve appropriate course of action.

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 2

Operations and Procedures

Page 1

2.1 Fire Management Plans. A Fire Management Plan will be developed to cover all tracts of burnable vegetation.

A. Purpose. To address tribal goals and objectives, the ecological role of wildland fire, values to be protected, preparedness, prevention, interagency mobilization, strategies for appropriate management responses to wildland fire, hazardous fuels management and prescribed fire use, and emergency rehabilitation of burned areas.

B. Scope and Content.

(1) A Fire Management Plan can encompass a full range of management responses, from aggressive suppression of the fire, to allowing the fire to take a natural role within the ecosystem, provided that prescriptive criteria and language exist.

(2) In those instances where Indian lands are not bounded by reservation boundaries and tracts are owned by individual allottees, a Regional Allotment Plan will be developed to identify how Indian Affairs will respond to the fire preparedness needs and requests of individual allottees.

(3) Within the framework of tribal land use objectives, plans will document management strategies based on resource values to be protected or enhanced, while:

- (a) Minimizing expenditure of public funds for effective suppression;
- (b) Minimizing damage to resources and the environment; and
- (c) Implementing timely emergency rehabilitation measures.

(4) Plans should be a section of a land-use plan or natural resource plan, but in the absence of one of these integrated plans, it may stand alone.

(5) Plans must be covered by an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement unless incorporated into a land-use plan already covered by a NEPA document.

C. Approval. Fire Management Plans and Regional Allotment Plans will be prepared and approved by the appropriate agency administrator for each project, and where applicable, by the tribe.

2.2 Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation Plans.

A. Scope and content guidance is provided in the BAER Handbook.

B. Approval is based on dollar thresholds:

- (1) Plans under \$100,000 are approved at the agency level;
- (2) Plans between \$100,000 and \$250,000 are approved at the Regional Office; and
- (3) Plans exceeding \$250,000 must be approved by NIFC.

2.3 Supplemental Action Plans.

A. Operational fire prevention plans and mobilization plans will be prepared and updated annually by each Agency and tribe conducting a wildland fire management program.

B. Prescribed fire plans and mechanical fuel reduction project plans will be prepared as needed.

C. Approval will be by the organizations' delegated administrators.

2.4 Operations.

A. Wildland Fire.

(1) Wildland fires, on or near lands administered by Indian Affairs, which threaten life or structures, or are determined to be a threat to natural resources or facilities under the jurisdiction of Indian Affairs, will be considered emergencies; and suppression will be given priority over normal programs.

(2) Procurement necessary to accomplish wildland fire suppression is authorized pursuant to Section 302(c)(2) of the Federal Property and Administrative Service Act of 1949, as amended. This section may be cited as justification for such procurement.

(3) In the absence of an approved Fire Management Plan or where arson is suspected, initial attack will be taken and the fire suppressed.

(4) If a wildland fire escapes initial suppression actions, further actions will be determined through a WFSA.

B. Prescribed Fire. Prescribed fire, conducted according to procedures set forth in the Bureau's Fire Use Handbook and, where applicable, Regional Directives, may be used to achieve tribal land use or resource management objectives when included in a Fire Management Plan.

(1) When prescribed fires could cross boundaries between multiple jurisdictions, appropriate memoranda of agreement will be prepared.

(2) Prescribed fires that exceed the approved limits will be reclassified as wildland fires and a WFSA will be prepared.

(3) Prescribed fires may be implemented only by qualified personnel, and only in accordance with the approved prescribed fire implementation plan.

2.5 Personnel Qualifications.

A. Adherence to the NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide is mandatory for all firefighters and the IFMQ Guide is mandatory for fire program officers, fire specialists and fire project leaders.

B. Self-governance compacts, contracts or mutual aid agreement standards for qualification, physical fitness and safety will be those established by the parties to the agreement, but will not be less than NWCG and IFMQ standards.

C. Substance abuse poses an extreme threat to safety; there will be zero tolerance for illegal drug use and on-the-job substance abuse.

2.6 Fire Trespass. Fire trespass procedures will be carried out in accordance with 53 BIAM 7, Timber and Fire Trespass, and with any subsequent IAM Parts which supercede 53 BIAM.

2.7 Reports.

A. Wildland Fires. All wildland fire reports will be prepared in accordance with instructions issued by the Director, NIFC.

B. Hazardous Fuel Reduction Program. All prescribed fire and mechanical fuels treatment project reports will be prepared in accordance with instructions issued by the Director, NIFC.

2.8 Interagency Cooperation. As part of the commitment to interagency wildland fire management, Indian Affairs will:

A. Sponsor Indian Type I (Hotshot) crews as determined by GACG and national needs analyses. Type I Crews must meet National Interagency Hotshot Crew (IHC) standards and operate in accordance with the Bureau's National Hotshot Crew Management Guide and the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook.

(1) The Hotshot program will be managed by a Hotshot Crew Management Board with representation from the Hotshot crews and NIFC.

(2) Funding for crews will be requested and administered through NIFC.

(3) Within the scope of their training, experience and qualifications, Type I crews can provide additional Tribal and local interagency services at other than their home locations while maintaining availability for national mobilization.

B. Sponsor Indian Emergency Firefighter (EFF) programs as requested by tribes and determined by geographic area and national need.

(1) Crews will operate in accordance with the Bureau's Emergency Firefighting Crew Management Guide in conjunction with local and geographical area guides.

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 2

Operations and Procedures

Page 4

(2) The sponsoring home unit will provide local oversight and management of the crew(s).

(3) EFF will be hired by a Federal employee using the Administratively Determined (AD) Payment Plan in accordance with the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook and the CO/ADO Handbook.

(4) Funding for the program will be requested and administered through Regional Offices.

C. Provide a Bureau contact person in each of the GACCs serving Indian lands.

D. Provide a representative to NWCG working teams and task groups, as requested.

E. Manage the Bureau of Indian Affairs Standardized Wildland Engine Program with other federal agencies accepting the standard. The program is guided by a management board that develops an annual operating plan identifying the business to be accomplished and respective budget.

(1) Administration, management and funding of the program will be through the NIFC.

(2) Trucks and engine pumping units provided through the program will remain property of the Bureau.

2.9 Contracting of Protection Services. Contracts may be executed with other Federal agencies, Tribes, states, local, and private entities for wildland fire protection services pursuant to NWCG standards, existing statutes, Solicitor's opinions, regulations, and constraints governing utilization of appropriations.

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 3

Allowable Charges

Page 1

3.1 Department of the Interior Fire Coordinating Committee Budget Team (Budget Team).

The Department of the Interior prepares a consolidated budget for wildland fire management which is included in the appropriations for the Bureau of Land Management. The Committee's Budget Team is the focal point for most of the wildland fire program budget formulation work.

A. Indian Affairs' member of the Budget Team works with designated contacts in the Bureau budget office, the Budget Team, and the Bureau of Land Management budget office to ensure timely responses to Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

B. Each Budget Team member will maintain budget information for all Bureaus, so that a response to questions or the preparation of budget documents can proceed even if a Bureau representative is unavailable.

3.2 Wildland Fire Preparedness. Budgeting for wildland fire preparedness is based on approved FMPA and the determination of the Most Effective Level (MEL). Cost categories include:

A. Permanent personnel. Positions must be identified in the approved FMPA. Allowable costs include: base salaries, benefits and support costs for those individuals with general oversight responsibilities for an integrated fire program, or specific responsibilities for programs in fire suppression, emergency rehabilitation, fire prevention, fire planning, and hazardous fuels reduction.

(1) For a position to be eligible for full funding from fire program funds, 80 percent or more of the duties must be directly related to fire management.

(2) If the position description reflects that more than 50 percent of the duties relate directly to responsibilities for fire management activities, the position may be funded to the extent of the seasonal limits or 13 pay periods, whichever is greater.

(3) Furlough positions may be funded for all pay periods during which the employee is working directly for fire management.

B. Temporary and seasonal personnel. Allowable costs include:

(1) Base salaries and benefits during the established fire season; and

(2) Support costs such as travel, training, supplies, communications, vehicle availability, arduous duty physical examinations, and personal protective equipment.

C. Capitalized equipment purchases and minor renovation and maintenance of dedicated wildland fire program facilities, as determined by Federal Acquisition Regulations and/or facility management directive.

D. Interagency fair share costs and/or funded initiatives supported by interagency agreements include, but are not limited to activities in conjunction with NIFC, NWCG, IFCC, GACC, Alaska Fire Service (AFS), local interagency dispatch centers, aircraft contracts and bases, and miscellaneous fire preparedness-related capital equipment and training.

E. Miscellaneous costs involving bureau-specific studies and investigations, aircraft

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 3

Allowable Charges

Page 2

availability guarantees, operational research, equipment and technology development, utilities, information resources management, supplies, training, administrative support for personnel, procurement, budget preparation and execution, communications, and vehicle availability.

3.3 Wildland Fire Emergency Operations. This activity includes appropriate management actions or operational activities taken to suppress wildland fires to protect or enhance resource values. Area funding authorizations are based on the ten year average of actual obligations, with funds maintained at NIFC, and include the following operational areas.

A. Fire operations. All charges must be entered in the Project Cost Accounting Subsystem (PCAS) and must be charged to an incident number (PCAS number). PCAS numbers are allocated by the NIFC prior to the start of each fiscal year. Allowable costs include:

(1) Unpredictable and unprogrammed costs arising from operational wildland fire suppression actions; costs of actions for appropriate management of wildland fires used for resource benefits; and short term or temporary extraordinary measures taken to increase preparedness levels for suppression response during burning conditions which exceed planned local response capabilities;

(2) Emergency actions taken on wildland fires to prevent land degradation and the immediate loss or degradation of natural and cultural resources due to damage caused by active wildland fires or resulting from actions taken to suppress such fires; and

(3) Expenditures to cover salary costs for non-fire individuals involved in Emergency Operations, either permanently or on a temporary basis (see 3.4 of this chapter).

B. Burned Area Rehabilitation. Project numbers will be established by the NIFC when requested by a Regional Office and the project numbers and funding limitation will be entered in PCAS.

(1) Allowable costs:

(a) All emergency rehabilitation activities in an approved BAER plan, with the exception of those activities related to the suppression effort during and immediately following the fire; and

(b) On an exception basis and with the approval of NIFC, limited tree planting under very specific conditions and minor facility replacement or repair to protect public health and safety.

(2) Unallowable costs:

(a) Emergency rehabilitation exceed three (3) years or two (2) growing seasons in duration, for any one fire; and

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 3

Allowable Charges

Page 3

(b) Costs of restoring burned areas to productivity, rebuilding structures and facilities, documenting and surveying resources, and any other non-emergency actions to restore an area to its pre-fire condition and function.

C. Hazardous natural fuel reduction. Project numbers will be established by the NIFC when requested by a Regional Office and the project numbers and funding limitation will be entered in PCAS. All charges to this subactivity must be made to a PCAS number.

(1) Allowable costs:

(a) Planning and implementation of hazardous natural fuel reduction projects and restoration of ecosystems through the use of fire;

(b) Planning and implementation of hazardous natural fuel reduction projects through the use of mechanical treatment;

(c) Salaries, benefits and support costs for permanent, career seasonal and temporary personnel who are hired specifically for the hazardous natural fuels program, inside or outside the defined fire season. At least 80% of their time must be associated with the hazardous natural fuels program;

(d) Salaries of emergency fire fighters (EFF) hired for the on-site execution of prescribed fire;

(e) Site preparation, air quality monitoring, initial fire effects monitoring, plot establishment, and post-fire monitoring on these plots; a partnership between the various resource disciplines should be developed for long-term monitoring (beyond the first year);

(f) Equipment purchases that are identified and itemized in an approved annual operating plan and capitalized equipment over \$5,000 which has been approved by NIFC;

(g) Replacement or repair of capitalized equipment damaged or destroyed on hazardous natural fuels reduction projects following board of survey actions;

(h) Aircraft flight time costs associated with a hazardous natural fuels reduction project; and

(i) Training specifically related to fuels management and/or fire use and is necessary to fully carry out the duties of the position for personnel hired specifically for the hazardous natural fuels program.

(2) Unallowable Costs include treatment of fuels resulting from silvicultural or agricultural treatments for commodity production, such as timber stand improvement or logging slash or stubble fields.

3.4 Regular planned salaries for permanent wildland fire management personnel and for those temporary, career seasonal and seasonal personnel who are hired to meet preparedness

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part: 90

Wildland Fire Management

Chapter: 3

Allowable Charges

Page 4

requirements are unallowable costs under Emergency Operations.

3.5 Severity Preparedness. Support is available to improve initial attack capabilities when abnormal fire conditions occur throughout a region resulting in the fire season starting earlier than normal, lasting longer than normal, or exceeding average high fire danger ratings for prolonged periods. Typical uses of severity funds are to temporarily increase or extend firefighting staff, provide for extended or additional use of aircraft, increase fire prevention activities, and extend or increase other contractual services.

A. Abnormal conditions are those that exceed the weather and fire history conditions used in the FMPA to determine the MEL organization and therefore exceed the planned workload.

B. Declaration of severity must include interagency support.

C. Severity funds are not provided to raise funding levels to those identified in the FMPA as 100% of MEL.

D. Request to use operations funds for severity preparedness purposes must be submitted in the proper format from Regional Offices to NIFC. Upon approval, a PCAS number will be assigned and a funding limitation established.

3.6 Contingency Funding. A contingency fund exists to cover costs when the funds appropriated for operational and emergency rehabilitation have been exhausted. The contingency funds are administered through the Bureau of Land Management.